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# United States Department of Agriculture,

## BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,

Seed and Plant Introduction and Distribution,

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### MUNG BEAN (*Phaseolus radiatus* and *Phaseolus max*).

The mung bean is one of the commonly cultivated legumes of India and other Asiatic countries. It is there grown mainly for the seed, which is an important article of human food, but the straw is also prized as forage for live stock.

Both species are very variable, so that it has been possible by selection to secure a large number of varieties, distinguished by differences in habit, size, earliness, seed production, etc. The largest and coarsest variety is the Newman bean, originally found growing without cultivation near Clemson College, S. C., but undoubtedly derived from some of the early importations of seed from India. The two species are distinguished mainly by the color of the seeds—*Phaseolus radiatus*, the green mung, and *Phaseolas max*, the black mung.

As a fodder plant the mung bean gives considerable promise. The habit of the plants is similar to that of cowpeas, and the hay is of about the same value, though accurate data on this point are not available. The crop is strongly drought resistant, and its greatest promise is undoubtedly in the semiarid Southwest. Indications are that it will not compete successfully with cowpeas where this crop is at its best. The mung bean succumbs readily to frost and must therefore be grown where it is likely to mature before frost. It is doubtful whether it can be grown farther north than Kansas.

The two largest growing varieties are the Newman bean and the Grecian bean. The Newman bean is the largest and coarsest of the entire group, is erect, and makes a very vigorous growth. The Grecian variety is not as large as the Newman bean, but is considerably larger than the rest of the group. One of the principal objections to these and to the entire group is that they shatter their seeds pretty badly. The seed is also subject to attack by weevil.

*Cultural directions.*—Practically the same methods employed in growing cowpeas will be satisfactory with the mung bean. It is recommended that the seed be planted in rows  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet apart, with the seed scattered every 4 or 5 inches in the row. This bean should be cultivated in the same manner as cowpeas. The crop should be harvested for hay as soon as the plants have filled a heavy crop of beans and not later than the first pods begin to turn black in ripening. If the crop is grown for seed, the bean may be picked from time to time, and in this way the plants will be able to put on a new crop of seed. The planting may be done in the spring as soon as the soil is well warmed up. Good tillage should prevail.



